

## on the COVER



Boats and ships of all sizes, private and commercial, can be found along the New River

District staff during a practice drill on emergency response procedures

Bringing in native plants helps to ensure that restoration efforts will be successful

Skilled technicians work constantly to maintain the structures and facilities of water management

Scientists keep a close check on exotic and invasive species, which threaten native flora and fauna

Water is moved through gates and structures to alleviate flooding or supplement water supply

## Communication Links Communities



“I have worked diligently with staff to expand District outreach and partnership efforts into our 16 counties.”

– PAMELA BROOKS-THOMAS  
GOVERNING BOARD VICE-CHAIR

As the Vice-Chair of the South Florida Water Management District Governing Board, I believe that it is incumbent upon this agency to ensure that the region’s diverse communities are informed and involved concerning water management decisions. Strong partnerships with other governments, community leaders and groups, as well as professional and civic organizations, are vital to helping us get our message out about how our efforts impact central and southern Florida residents and businesses.

I have worked diligently with staff to expand District outreach and partnership efforts into our 16 counties, and with state and national organizations. Those efforts are beginning to pay off. I am happy to report that more informal meetings and forums are being held in the local community on key topics such as Everglades restoration. In addition, the foundation has been laid for greater networking opportunities with businesses and organizations in order to get information into the hands of their members.

By personally participating in holiday parades and community events, as well as promoting District involvement in state and national conferences, my goal is to demonstrate the District’s commitment to a stronger, more accessible presence with our varied and diverse publics. I believe that the best, most effective relationships must be built upon

trust and open communication. And because today’s youth are tomorrow’s decision-makers, it is imperative that we support educational and mentoring opportunities.

Being the Governing Board member from Broward County, I am especially proud of the positive progress we have made in my home county. Michael Jackson, the director of our local service center, and his staff have made tremendous strides in coordinating intergovernmental and community outreach efforts. The District has numerous long-term mission-related initiatives under way in the county that must be effectively communicated and addressed in order to be mutually beneficial and successful from both the regional and local perspectives.

Both Michael and I have made it a priority to meet with area state legislators as well as the mayor, city manager and public utility director of Broward municipalities to discuss issues of mutual concern.

In addition, the full District Governing Board periodically holds joint meetings with the Broward County Commission, and the District’s Water Resources Advisory Commission held its February meeting in Fort Lauderdale with an agenda devoted to Broward-related issues.

My fellow Governing Board members and I look to this advisory group to provide us with recommendations and input on critical resource management

issues, including Everglades restoration and water supply planning. I was able to ensure Broward County representation on this diverse, broad-interest commission by recommending two of the members.

Al Calloway of Opportunities Industrialization Centers of South Florida, Inc., provides insight on economic and environmental justice concerns and shares my belief in the importance of citizen involvement. Also, Broward County Commissioner Kristin Jacobs lends her valuable government experience and expertise to our advisory commission deliberations. Long a proponent of water conservation and Xeriscape landscaping as a proven resource management tool, the District is happy to partner with Commissioner Jacobs and the County’s Water Matters public education campaign.

In support of the first interagency Water Matters outreach event in May, more than 1,500 Broward County residents came to Tree Top Park to learn about environmentally friendly landscaping, water conservation and backyard wildlife habitats.

While I am proud of the expanded efforts the District has made to actively engage more and more of our communities and organizations in water management matters, I will continue to pursue additional opportunities to build on these collaborative and beneficial partnerships.

## District Leadership Update

“I am pleased to announce some key management changes to benefit the agency and the public that we serve,” said Executive Director Henry Dean.

**Carol Wehle**, formerly head of the Greater West Coast Department, now serves as **Assistant Executive Director**. She is responsible for day-to-day operations, issue management and agency-wide strategic planning. **Sheryl Wood** has been named **General Counsel**. She has worked at the agency for 14 years, serving as Deputy General Counsel since 1999. She is responsible for providing leadership and guidance to the agency’s Office of Counsel. **John Williams** was appointed by the Governing Board to serve as **District Ombudsman**. A veteran water resource attorney, he brings nearly 25 years of experience to this facilitator and problem-solving role, including 19 years with the St. Johns River Water Management District.



Carol Wehle  
Assistant Executive  
Director



Sheryl Wood  
General Counsel



John Williams  
Ombudsman

## If You Build It....

To build what may be the world’s largest public works project, it takes companies of all types and sizes, with many kinds of expertise. When the District needed a reliable, experienced earth-moving company to build a 1.3 mile-long limerock berm in the middle of one of our Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs), the Jones Company of South Florida responded with a low bid and a high determination to do the best job possible.

“This minority firm was a real go-getter and was eager to demonstrate their capabilities,” said Chip Merriam, Deputy Executive



Jones Company owners  
Lance and Angela Jones  
at the job site.

Director for Water Resources. “We were very pleased with their professionalism and dedication to completing the work under budget and ahead of schedule.”

This project is just one of many that demonstrates the District’s commitment to increasing the participation of small businesses.

STAs are a critical component of the District’s on-going efforts to reduce the amount of phosphorus entering the Everglades. To enhance the performance of these constructed wetlands, the District is conducting a variety of scientific and engineering demonstration projects with variations in how the areas are managed. When a small-scale application proves promising and warrants further investigation, the District moves forward with a full-scale version. This adaptive management approach allows the District to constantly adjust and fine-tune the technologies being used in order to accelerate progress in meeting water quality mandates.

Scientists speculated that the use of a berm to subdivide STA treatment cells would help redistribute

water flow – allowing more time for plant uptake of the excess nutrients – and would likely improve the overall phosphorus removal performance of the STA.

To put this concept into action, the District applied to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant to fund construction of the full-scale demonstration project.

The Jones Company, a local firm based in Lauderhill, submitted the low bid and confidently took on the task of building the 6,900-foot long, 2.5-foot high berm in Stormwater Treatment Area 1 West, located in central Palm Beach County. More than 21,000 tons of limerock were trucked in and placed during the operation. While the contract allowed for a five-month construction schedule, the work was completed within four months.

“We are glad to have the opportunity to work with the District on this project and it is exciting for us to be a participant in efforts to save the Everglades,” said Angela Jones, company president.